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(54) **BLOOD COMPONENT SAMPLING SYSTEM AND BLOOD PROCESSING SYSTEMS AND METHODS EMPLOYING SAME**

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G01N 1/18 (2006.01)
A61M 1/02 (2006.01)
A61B 5/15 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **G01N 1/18** (2013.01); **A61M 1/0231** (2014.02); **A61M 1/0236** (2014.02); **A61B 5/150992** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC **A61M 1/0236**; **A61B 5/150992**; **F04B 43/12**; **G01N 1/18**; **G01N 33/48**
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A blood component sampling system and method are disclosed. The system is pre-connected and includes a collected blood component container and a reservoir having substantially fixed volume and at least one volumetric indicator indicating a selected volume and a sample container docking station configured to cooperate with a sample collection container. The system and method provide ease of sampling with reduced risk of contamination.

17 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets

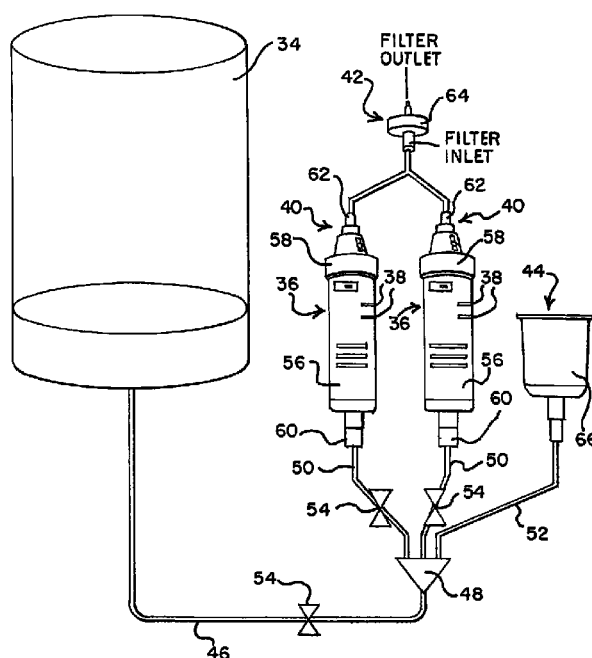


FIG. 1

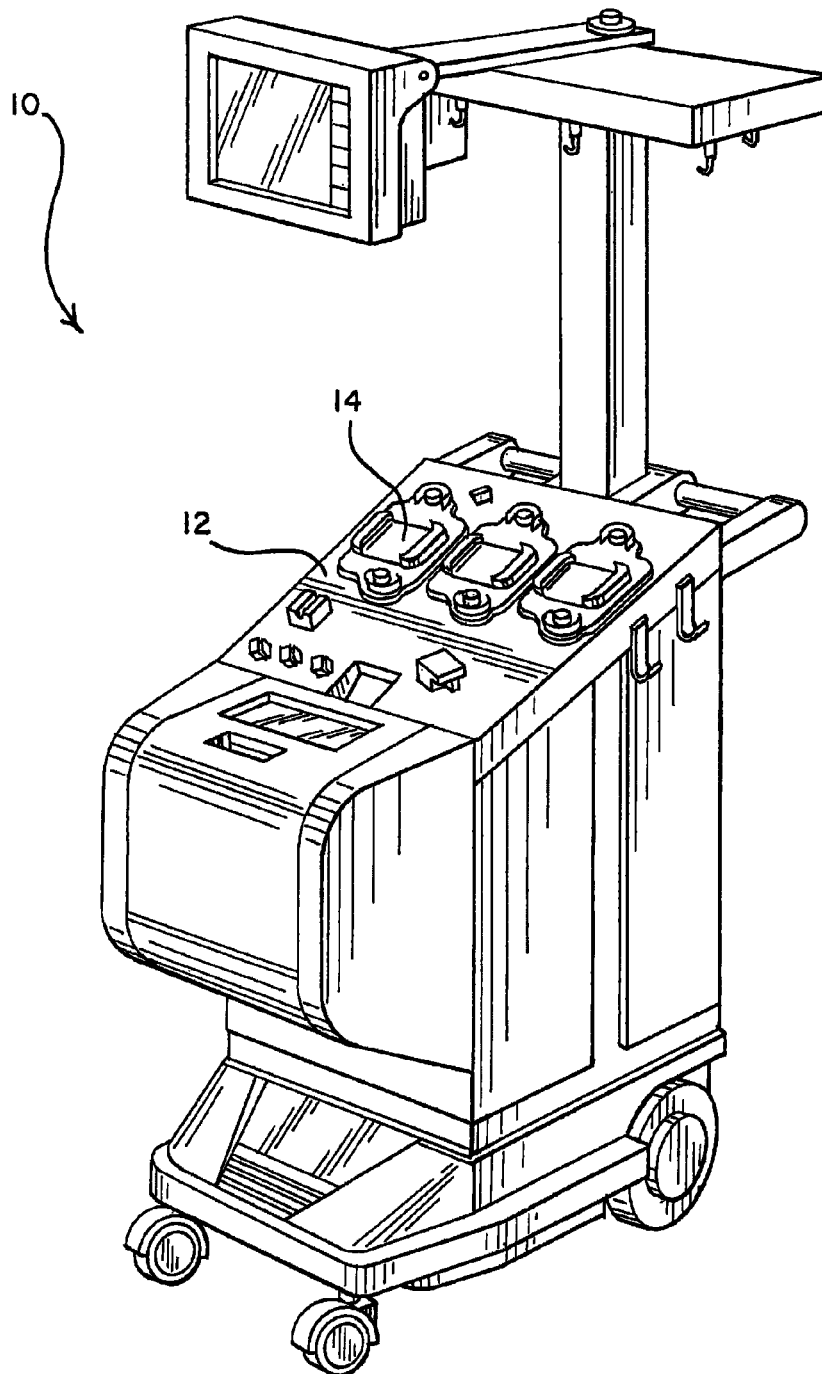


FIG. 2

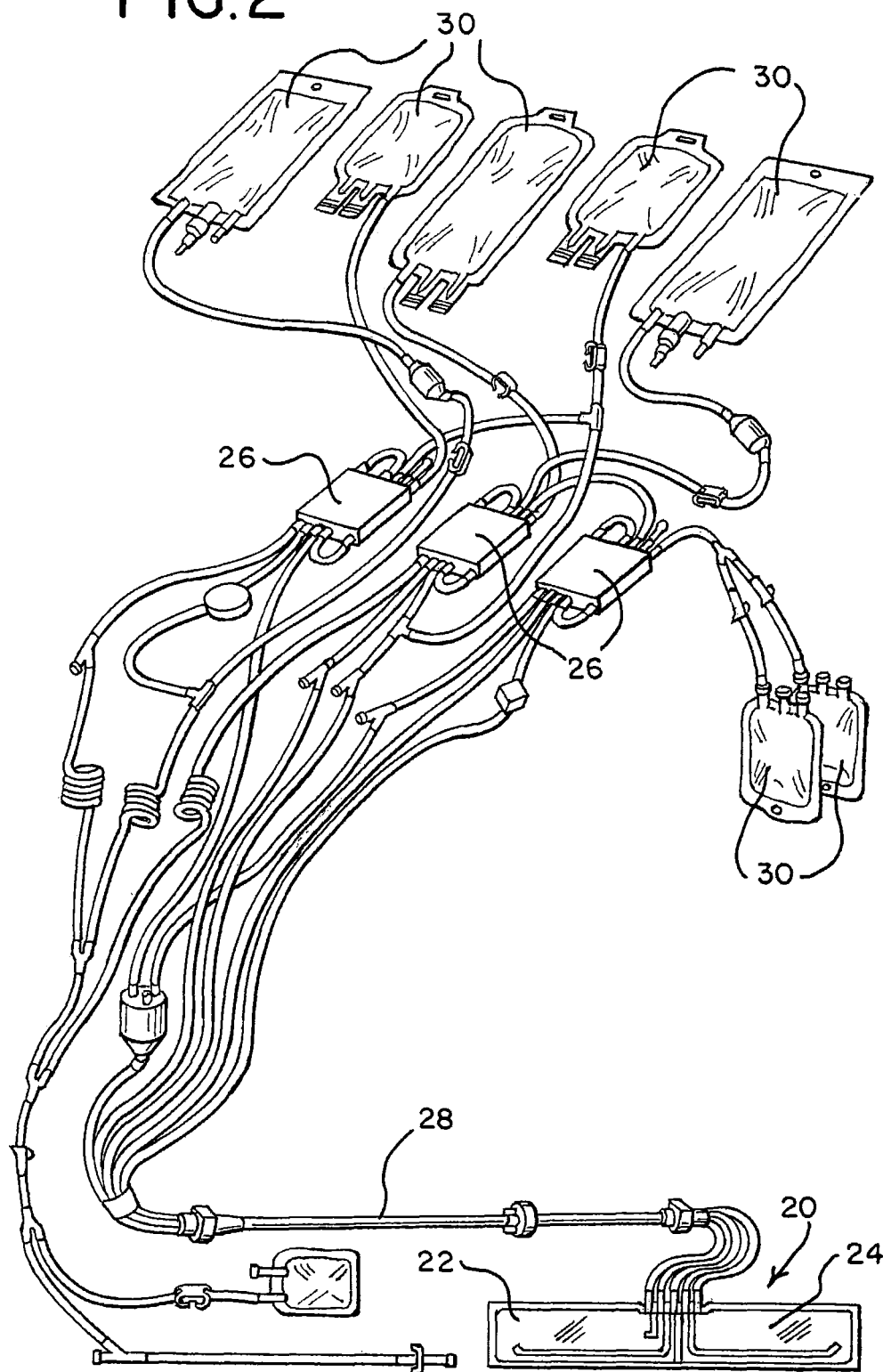


FIG. 3

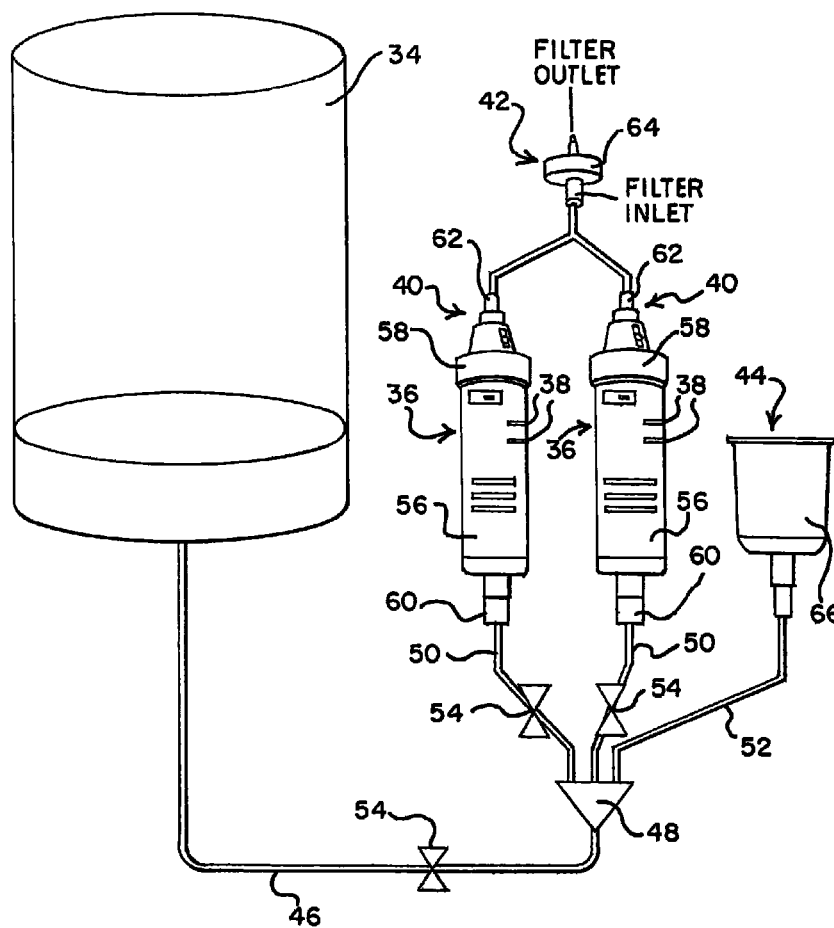


FIG. 4

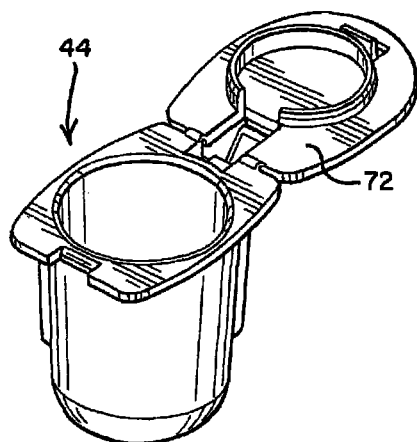


FIG. 5

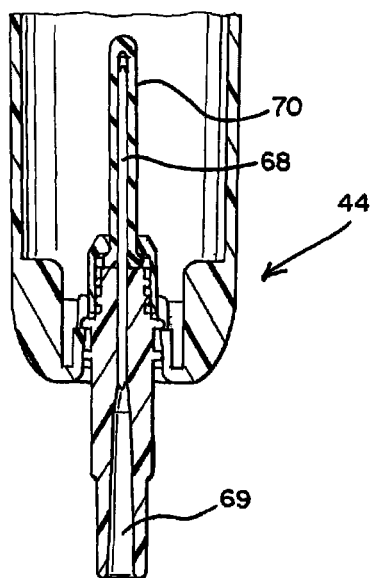


FIG. 6A

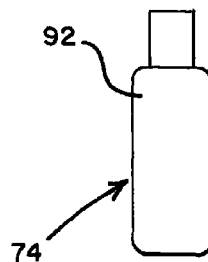
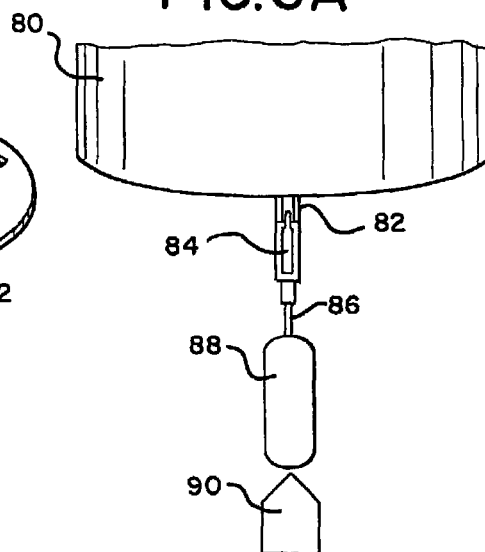


FIG. 6B



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BLOOD COMPONENT SAMPLING SYSTEM AND BLOOD PROCESSING SYSTEMS AND METHODS EMPLOYING SAME

This application claims priority to and the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/702,924, filed Sep. 19, 2012, which is hereby also incorporated by reference herein.

FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present subject matter relates to blood processing systems and, more particularly, to a blood component sampling system and to blood processing systems and methods employing a blood component sampling system.

DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

Whole blood is routinely separated into its various components, such as red blood cells, platelets, and plasma during or after collection from donors. This is sometimes carried out manually, typically by collecting a unit of whole blood from a donor and then processing it at a different location to separate the whole blood into desired components. Often, however, the process is carried out using automated or semi-automated blood separation (or apheresis) devices, which separate and collect one or more desired components from whole blood and return the remaining components to the donor. Typical apheresis devices employ reusable durable devices or equipment based on centrifugation or other separation principles, in combination with single use, sterile blood processing sets or flow circuits.

As noted above, these devices often target one or more specific blood components such as platelets or red cells and return the remaining components. Red cells are often used in the treatment of trauma injuries. Platelets are often used for administration to cancer patients undergoing treatment that suppresses the ability of the body to generate new cells. Platelets, which are among the shortest lived blood cell, are critical to blood clotting and cancer patients often require repeated administration of platelets. Because platelets are usually stored at about room temperature, which is conducive to the growth of bacteria, testing of collected platelets is routinely carried out for bacterial contamination. In the past, such testing has been carried out with a variety of equipment and devices, such as syringes and the like for withdrawing samples from the platelet collection container. This is workable, but has a number of shortcomings, and there is a continuing need for products and methods which are conducive to efficient, reliable testing without creating undue risk of contamination during the testing process.

The present subject matter is described for exemplary purposes only with reference to the AMICUS® apheresis system marketed by Fenwal, Inc. of Lake Zurich, Ill. One version of the AMICUS® system is described in greater detail in U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,696, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. However, the reference to the Amicus system is for purpose of illustration and not limitation. The present subject matter is also applicable to apheresis/collection systems from other manufacturers, and may be used with other blood components, including whole blood, as well.

SUMMARY

There are several aspects of the present subject matter that may be embodied separately or together in the devices, systems and methods described and claimed below. These aspects may be employed alone or in combination with other

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aspects of the subject matter described herein, and the description of these aspects together is not intended to preclude the use of these aspects separately or the claiming of such aspects separately or in different combinations as set forth in the claims appended hereto.

In one aspect, a pre-assembled sterile blood component sampling system comprises a collected blood component container, at least one reservoir having a substantially fixed volume with at least one volumetric indicator indicating a selected volume within the reservoir and a sample container docking station configured to cooperate with a sample collection container. In systems requiring venting of residual or displacement air, such as a system employing a rigid reservoir, the reservoir may also include a vent opening for the flow of displacement air therethrough and the system may include a sterile filter disposed between the vent opening and the ambient atmosphere to filter any air passing therethrough. In this aspect, a first fluid flow path selectively communicates between the blood component container and the at least one reservoir, and a second fluid flow path selectively communicates between the at least one reservoir and the docking station. Therefore, a blood component sample of selected volume may be transferred from the collected blood component container to the reservoir and from the reservoir to docking station for withdrawal into a sample collection container.

In another aspect, a method of blood component retrieval from a collected blood component container comprises flowing blood component through a sterile closed fluid flow path into a reservoir having a substantially fixed volume and at least one volumetric indicator indicating a selected volume until the selected volume amount is in the reservoir, closing the fluid flow path between the reservoir and blood component container, and flowing the selected volume of blood component from reservoir through a closed fluid flow path communicating with a sample container docking station and into a separate sample collection container.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary durable fluid (e.g., blood) processing centrifuge system that may be used in combination with a preassembled sterile fluid flow circuit according to the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a preassembled sterile fluid flow circuit that has been used with the system of FIG. 1 and may be used in combination with the sampling system and method of the present disclosure;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of a sampling system in accordance with this disclosure that may be used in combination with the fluid processing system of FIG. 1 and the fluid flow circuit of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a sample container docking station employed in the disposable sampling system of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the lower portion of the docking system, illustrating the fluid connection port and a covered piercing needle or spike.

FIG. 6A is a plan view of another embodiment of a sampling system in accordance with the subject matter, and FIG. 6B is a side view of a flexible reservoir (sample chamber) and restraining fixture.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENTS

The embodiments disclosed herein are for the purpose of providing the required description of the present subject mat-

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ter. They are only exemplary, and the present subject matter may be embodied in various forms and employed with various blood processing or apheresis systems. Therefore, specific details disclosed herein are not to be interpreted as limiting the subject matter defined in the accompanying claims.

FIG. 1 shows a well known durable centrifugal fluid processing (apheresis) device or system **10** that may be used in combination with the sampling system and methods according to the present disclosure. The system is currently marketed as the AMICUS® separator by Fenwal, Inc. of Lake Zurich, Ill. The system **10** can be used for processing various fluids, but is particularly well suited for processing whole blood and other suspensions of biological cellular materials. The system **10** includes a centrifuge chamber (not visible in FIG. 1) suitable for separating a fluid such as blood into its components (e.g. red cells, plasma and platelets) based on the density of such components. A more detailed description of the centrifuge and the other elements of the system **10** can be found in U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,696, which is incorporated by reference herein. While various aspects of the present disclosure will be described in the context of their use with the system **10** of FIG. 1, it should be understood that the sampling system and method described herein may be used in other blood separation systems and devices such as, but not limited to, the Fenwal Alyx® and CS3000® systems, the Caridian BCT Spectra® and Trima® systems, and the Haemonetics MCS® device and other such systems.

Turning back to the Amicus separator of FIG. 1, the device has a sloped front panel **12** that includes at least one cassette holder **14** and assorted sensors and valves. The cassette holder **14** is configured to receive a fluid processing cassette **16** (FIG. 2) of a disposable, single use processing set. An exemplary processing set that is suitable for use in the system **10** of FIG. 1 can be found in FIG. 2 and in U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,696 incorporated by reference herein.

FIG. 2 shows an exploded view of a pre-assembled and sterilized disposable processing assembly or fluid circuit **18** that is usable in association with the centrifuge assembly **10**. The assembly **18** includes a flexible plastic processing chamber **20**, and in use, the centrifuge assembly **10** rotates the processing chamber **18** within a rotating bowl or channel to centrifugally separate blood components. The construction of the processing chamber **20** can vary. As illustrated, the chamber is for two stage separation procedures, such as where red cells are separated from platelet-rich plasma in a first separation stage or compartment **22** and platelets are concentrated from the platelet-rich plasma in a second separation stage or compartment **24**. The processing assembly **18** includes an array of flexible tubing that forms a closed fluid circuit that conveys liquids to and from the processing chamber **20**.

The fluid circuit **18** includes a number of containers **30**. In use, the containers **30** fit on hangers on the centrifuge assembly **12** (see FIG. 2) to dispense and receive liquids during processing. The fluid circuit **18** also includes one or more flow control cassettes, designated **26A**; **26B**; and **26C** that serve, in association with pump and valve stations on the centrifuge assembly **10**, to direct liquid flow among the multiple liquid sources and destinations during a blood processing procedure.

A portion of the fluid circuit **18** leading between the cassettes **26** and the processing chamber **20** is bundled together to form an umbilicus **28**. The umbilicus **28** links the rotating parts of the processing assembly **18** (principally the processing chamber **20**) with the nonrotating, stationary part of the processing assembly **18** (principally the cassettes **26**, containers **30** and related tubing).

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One significant use of the Amicus separator is to separate and collect platelets from the blood of a healthy donor for later therapeutic administration to a patient. In that process the platelets are concentrated in the second stage or compartment **24** of processing chamber **20**. The concentrated platelets may be retained in the second separation compartment or re-suspended and transferred to a separate storage container. In other separation or apheresis systems, platelet concentrate may be collected directly into a storage container. As noted earlier, platelets are usually stored at about room temperatures, and are routinely tested for bacterial contamination.

FIG. 3 illustrates an example of a preassembled sterile sampling assembly or subassembly **32** that may be pre-connected as part of the sterile disposable processing circuit **18** and employed in connection with bacterial testing. One of the illustrated components of the sampling assembly is a collected platelet storage container **34**. This container may, for example, be the second separation compartment **24** of the processing chamber or a separate storage container, such as one of containers **30**. Of course, the present subject matter is not limited to use with a platelets only, but may be used with whole blood or with other component collections, such as concentrated red cells or plasma, where testing is desired. Accordingly, as used in this description, unless otherwise specified, "blood component" includes whole blood, red cells and red cell concentrate, platelets and platelet concentrate, plasma and/or other elements of blood.

As shown in FIG. 3, in addition to the collected blood component container **34**, the sampling assembly or sub-assembly **32** includes at least one reservoir or sample chamber **36** of substantially fixed volume having at least one volumetric indicator or indicia **38** and a vent opening **40** for flow of displacement air into the reservoir, a sterile filter **42** to filter air passing into the reservoir, and a sample container docking station **44**. These components are interconnected by flexible plastic tubing or other suitable flow conduits. More specifically, tubing or other conduit **46**, extends from a port on the bottom of the collected blood component container **34** to a three way connector **48** from the three way connector. Tubing or other conduit **50** extends from the three way connector to each of the illustrated reservoirs **36**, and tubing or conduit **52** extends from the three way connector to the sample container docking station **44**. Conduits **46** and **50** are each preferably controlled by a flow control clamp **54** for manual control of flow through the particular tubing or conduit. As noted earlier, the entire sampling assembly or subassembly **32** is preferably preassembled and sterilized and part of the preassembled and pre-sterilized disposable fluid processing circuit **18**, or it may be separately provided and sterilely attached to the processing circuit **18** before or after blood component collection, if desired.

As noted above, the collected blood component container **34** may be of any suitable design or configuration, but will typically comprise a flexible plastic container of material suitable for storage of the particular blood component in question. The collected blood component **34** may remain attached to the larger disposable fluid processing circuit or, more typically, is sealed and separated from the larger fluid processing circuit after the target blood component is collected. Preferably, the collected blood component container is pre-attached to the sampling subassembly **32**, and an internal frangible closure, as well known in the medical device field, may be provided in the container port to which tubing **46** is attached or may be provided in tubing **46** itself so that the container is fully sealed until access is desired, at which time the frangible closure is opened by manual manipulation of the port or tubing. It should be noted that the collected blood

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component container and blood component therein may also be the result of a manual collection process where collected platelets from multiple donors are pooled together into a single dose and stored in the blood component container.

The reservoir **36** has a substantially fixed volume, and in one embodiment may be a rigid container of fixed volume for receiving a selected sample quantity of fluid from the collected component container. As illustrated in FIG. **3**, the sampling subassembly includes two reservoirs **36**, although one or more reservoirs may be employed as desired. For example, two or more reservoirs may be desired if a particularly large volume of blood component is collected in the container **34**, such as a double or triple dose of platelet concentrate. Alternatively, a single reservoir may be used multiple times for multiple samples if desired.

As illustrated in FIG. **3**, the reservoir has a substantially clear rigid plastic housing **56** which allows ease of user viewing of the contents. The housing is closed at the upper end by cap **58**. The reservoir housing **56** has a bottom inlet opening or port **60** for receiving a fluid sample from the collected blood component container **34** and for dispensing a sample to the docking station **44**, and the cap **58** has a vent opening or port **62** for allowing displacement air to exit or enter the reservoir.

For indicating the volume of sample fluid withdrawn into the reservoir from the collected blood component container, the reservoir includes one or more volumetric indicators or indicia **38** that provide a visual indication to the user of the volume of sample within the reservoir. In the illustrated embodiment, the reservoir has two volumetric indicators (e.g. fill lines or numeric indicators) indicating different volumetric levels such as minimum or maximum or simply different volumetric levels. This allows the subassembly to accommodate different bacterial testing systems that often require different sample sizes for testing. In some situations the sampling system may require a minimum sample size, and other systems may require a sample size between minimum and maximum quantities and other sampling systems simply require different sample sizes. For example, a testing system may require a sample volume of not less than 8 ml for accuracy and resolution, but not greater than 10 ml so as to avoid false positives. Also, withdrawing more blood component than is needed wastes valuable blood component. Accordingly, the volumetric indicator **38** on the reservoir preferably accommodates a variety of a sampling system that may be employed by the end user. Without limiting the foregoing, one well known bacterial testing system with which the illustrated sampling assembly may be used is the BacT/ALERT microbial detection system from Biorad, Inc. of Durham, N.C.

Although the reservoir **36** is preferably rigid with fixed internal volume, the reservoir may also be of flexible plastic material, such as a bag or pouch, which is constrained so that it provides a substantially fixed volume that varies only within allowable error. For example, such a reservoir may include a rigid outer sleeve, pouch, frame or fixture that constrains the expansion of the flexible reservoir to the desired substantially fixed volume. Alternatively, the reservoir, if made of flexible plastic material may include constraining structures, such as a flexible but non-extensible ribbons, fibers or mesh, adhered to the reservoir to limit its filled expansion to the substantially desired volume. A flexible reservoir may not require venting, but if venting of residual or displacement air is required, a sterile filter and vent port arrangement such as described earlier may be employed.

To maintain sterility while allowing gas to exit the reservoir **36** when it is being filled and displacement gas to enter when it is being emptied, the sterilizing filter **64** is attached to the upper vent **40** of the reservoir so that any venting or displace-

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ment gas must pass through the filter. The filter **64** may be of any suitable construction but, as illustrated, includes a rigid plastic housing having an inlet, (in sealed attachment to reservoir vent opening **62**) an outlet to the ambient atmosphere and a sterilizing filter media located internally of the housing and between the inlet and the outlet. Such a sterile filter media may be, for example a 0.2 or 0.22 micron antimicrobial membrane filter of type well known and commonly available from manufacturers such as Pall Corporation and others.

As noted earlier, the sample blood component is drawn from the reservoirs **36** into the sample container docking station **44**. One version of a docking station is illustrated in FIGS. **4** and **5**. The docking station **44** shown there includes a sample barrel or housing **66** for receiving a vacuum-charged container such as a BacT/ALERT sample container, for drawing the blood component sample from the reservoir. As illustrated in FIG. **5**, the docking station may include a hollow piercing needle or spike **68** that extends upwardly from the floor of the sample barrel **66** and is in fluid communication with bottom inlet port **69** of the sample barrel. The needle is preferably covered by a flexible, pierceable sleeve **70** and the upper open end of the barrel is closable by a cover **72** hingedly connected to the barrel and including a releasable locking feature or arrangement.

In use, a vacuum-charged sample container **74** is inserted into the sample barrel **66** of the docking station **44**. At the end of the sample container is a pierceable diaphragm or septum, and as the sample container is inserted into the barrel, the needle or piercing pin cover **72** is forced downwardly past the piercing end, and the needle or spike **68** pierces the diaphragm or septum of the sample container. The vacuum in the container then draws the fluid sample from the reservoir into the sample container. Because the reservoir is of substantially fixed volume, the user can be better assured that the quantities required for the particular bacterial testing system will be satisfied without undue risk of inadvertent contamination. Further, unduly large amount of valuable blood component will not be withdrawn for testing purposes, reducing unnecessary waste.

In connection with providing relative precise quantities of blood component for testing purposes, it should be understood that if a small residual amount of blood component remains in tubing **46** between clamp **54** and three-way connector **48** and in tubing **50** between the three way connector and reservoir(s), such quantities may be accounted for in the location of the volumetric indicator **38** on the reservoir, so that the desired volume drawn into the sample container is the sum of the reservoir volume and tubing-contained quantities. Also, to better assure reproducibility, if tubing-contained quantities are sufficiently large to require consideration, the length of tubing **50** and tubing **46** downstream of clamp **54** may be fixed and controlled during production to limit variation between different sampling subassemblies.

Method of Use

The sampling assembly or subassembly **32** may be used to provide reliable volumetric fluid samples for bacterial testing with reduced risk of contamination and while avoiding unnecessary waste of valuable collected blood component as described below. Assuming, for purposes of discussion, that the collected blood component container **34** has been a sealed and separated from the remainder of the blood processing circuit **18** and remains attached to the sampling subassembly **32**, to transfer a selected sample from the collected component container **34** to one or more of the reservoirs **36**, the collected blood component container is preferably raised to a

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height above the reservoir **36**. Clamp **54** on tubing conduit **46** is then opened and one of the clamps **54** on one of the tubing conduits **50** to the selected reservoir is also opened. As a result, flow of blood component from the blood component collection container is allowed under gravitational force into the selected reservoir. The flow rate may be controlled by varying the degree of occlusion of either the clamp on the tubing **46** or the clamp on the tubing **50** leading to the selected reservoir. The reservoir is filled to the desired level as will be readily visually evident to the user from the volumetric indicator **30** on the reservoir. At that point, the clamp **54** on the tubing extending from the three way connector to the reservoir may be closed or, alternatively, clamp **54** on the unfilled reservoir may be opened to allow sterile extraction of an additional sample aliquot from the collection container into the second reservoir in the manner described above. At the completion of filling of the reservoir or reservoirs, the clamps between the collected blood component container and the three way connector and between the three way connector and the reservoirs are closed.

As the reservoirs are filled with blood component, air or gas escaping from the reservoirs must pass through the sterilizing filter **64** and, similarly, as described later, as sample flows from the reservoir to the sample container docking station the sterilizing filter allows sterile displacement air to enter the reservoir for complete emptying. After the sample reservoirs are filled, the reservoirs **36** may be disconnected from the collected blood component container **34**, if desired, by sealing and severing the tubing or conduit **46** that extends between the collection container and the three way connector **48**.

For transferring the contents of the reservoir to the sample container docking station, the reservoir and the docking station are each preferably maintained in a generally vertical orientation. The clamp **54** on the tubing conduit **50** of the selected reservoir is opened and the sample bottle is pushed into the barrel of the docking station **44**, causing the piercing pin or needle **68** to pierce the diaphragm or the septum of the sample container. Due to the vacuum in the sample container, the fluid in the reservoir will flow through the conduit **46**, through the three way connector **48** and through the conduit **50** into the inlet port **69** of the docking station, through the piercing spike or needle **68** and into the sample container. After the sample is withdrawn, the sample container may be removed from the docking station. Sleeve **70** will recover the needle **67** and cover **72** can be closed over the open end of sample barrel **66** to reduce contamination risk.

If it is desired at the time to remove the sample that was collected in the second of the illustrated reservoirs, the first sample collection container may be withdrawn from the docking station and a fresh, vacuum charged container inserted and similar steps carried out to allow flow from the selected reservoir into the additional collection container.

Another Embodiment

FIGS. **6A** and **6B** show further embodiments of the present subject matter. FIG. **6A** illustrates a pre-attached sampling assembly or subassembly including a collected blood component container **80** having a bottom end port **82** containing a frangible connector **84**. The port **82** is pre-connected via tubing **86** to a single sample container or reservoir **88** which is pre-connected to a sample container docking station **90** suitable for use with one or more sample collection containers, such as a BacT/ALERT container **92**.

FIG. **6B** illustrates, in side view, a generally u-shaped frame or fixture **92** as one type of restraining structure that

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could be used in the event the reservoir **88** is made of flexible material. The fixture may be sized to meet particular user requirements. For example, different users and/or different testing systems may require that different blood or blood component volumes be drawn for test purposes. In the embodiment in FIG. **6B**, restraining fixtures of different sizes or of an adjustable size may be provided to limit/control the volume of the sample withdrawn into a flexible reservoir **88** to that required by the particular user or testing system. The fixture may also have visible indicia of different volumes, such as minimum and maximum, that provides direct volumetric indication to the user, particularly when the flexible reservoir is clear.

In summary, as a consequence of the construction and operation of the sampling subassembly, it may be seen that relatively precise predictable quantities of blood component samples may be withdrawn for testing with reliable amounts of the volumes necessary for testing and without risking a breach of sterility by reason of unnecessary or repeated connections or disconnections of the reservoirs or sampling containers from the system.

The invention claimed is:

1. A pre-connected sterile blood component sampling system comprising:

- a collected blood component container;
 - at least one reservoir having a substantially fixed volume, and including opposed ends and a side wall extending between the ends and at least one volumetric indicator located on the side wall of the reservoir and indicating a selected volume;
- a sample container docking station configured to cooperate with a sample collection container;
- a first fluid flow path selectively communicating between the blood component container and through one end of the at least one reservoir, and wherein the location of the volumetric indicator on the side wall of the reservoir is at a position corresponding to an internal volume of the reservoir between the one end and the position of the indicator that is equal to the selected volume minus a volume of at least a portion of the first fluid flow path whereby the selected volume indicated by the volumetric indicator takes into account the volume of blood component residing in the at least a portion of the first fluid flow path;
- a second fluid flow path selectively communicating between the one end of the at least one reservoir and the docking station; and
- whereby a blood component sample of selected volume may be transferred from the collected blood component container and the first fluid flow path to the docking station for withdrawal into a sample collection container.

2. The system of claim 1 further comprising a blood processing circuit for separating the collected blood component from whole blood.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the at least one reservoir comprises a rigid container.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the at least one reservoir comprises a flexible container including a separate constraint that substantially fixes the maximum volume of the container by limiting expansion of the container.

5. The system of claim 1 further comprising a first flow path valve in cooperative association with the first fluid flow path between the blood component container and the at least one reservoir.

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6. The system of claim 5 further comprising a second flow path valve in cooperative association with the second fluid flow path between the at least one reservoir and the sample container docking station.

7. The system of claim 1 in which the location of the volumetric indicator on the side wall of the reservoir is at a position corresponding to an internal volume of the reservoir between the one end and the position of the indicator that is substantially equal to a volume corresponding to one or more selected volumetric sample sizes minus the volume of blood component residing in the at least a portion of the first fluid flow path.

8. The system of claim 1 wherein the at least one reservoir includes a vent opening for flow of gas therethrough and the system includes a sterile filter disposed between the vent opening and ambient atmosphere to filter any gas passing therethrough.

9. The system of claim 1 in which the at least one reservoir comprises a plurality of said reservoirs in fluid communication with the same blood component container.

10. A method of blood component retrieval from a collected blood component container into a reservoir, which reservoir has a substantially fixed volume and includes opposed ends, a side wall extending between the ends and at least one volumetric indicator located on the side wall, the location of the volumetric indicator on the side wall of the reservoir being at a position corresponding to an internal volume of the reservoir between one end of the reservoir and the position of the volumetric indicator that is equal to a selected volume minus a flow path residual volume, the method comprising:

flowing blood component from the collected blood component container through a sterile closed fluid flow path into the reservoir through the one end thereof until the quantity of blood component in the reservoir reaches the level of the volumetric indicator and a quantity of blood component substantially equal to the flow path residual volume remains in a portion of the flow path;

closing the fluid flow path between the reservoir and blood component container; and

flowing the selected volume of blood component from the reservoir and the fluid flow path through a closed fluid flow path communicating with a sample container docking station and into a separate sample collection container.

11. The method of claim 10 including venting displacement air from the reservoir through a sterile filter during the flowing of blood component into the reservoir and venting displacement air into the reservoir through a sterile filter during the flowing of blood component from the reservoir.

12. A pre-connected sterile blood component sampling system comprising:

a collected blood component container including an upper end configured for hanging the container and a lower end;

at least two substantially rigid reservoirs, each having opposed upper and lower ends and a side wall extending between reservoir upper and lower ends, a substantially

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fixed volume, and at least one volumetric indicator located on the side wall of each reservoir and indicating a selected volume, the location of the volumetric indicator on the side wall of the reservoir being at a position corresponding to an internal volume of the reservoir between the lower end of the reservoir and the position of the volumetric indicator that is equal to the selected volume minus a volume of at least a portion of the fluid flow path;

a sample container docking station configured to cooperate with a sample collection container;

a first fluid flow path selectively communicating between the lower end of the blood component container and through the lower end of each reservoir;

a second fluid flow path selectively communicating between the lower end of each reservoir and the docking station;

a vent including a sterile filter comprising an antimicrobial filter media communicating between the ambient atmosphere and the reservoir through the upper end of each reservoir, and

whereby a blood component sample of selected volume may be transferred from the collected blood component container, the sterile filter allowing air to flow from the reservoir through the antimicrobial filter media into the ambient atmosphere during blood component inflow into the reservoir, and the selected volume of blood component may be transferred from each reservoir and the first fluid flow path to the docking station for withdrawal into a sample collection container, the sterile filter allowing air to flow through the antimicrobial filter media into the respective reservoir from the ambient atmosphere during blood component outflow from the reservoir.

13. The system of claim 12 further comprising a blood processing circuit for separating the collected blood component from whole blood.

14. The system of claim 12 further comprising a first flow path valve in cooperative association with the first fluid flow path between the blood component container and each reservoir.

15. The system of claim 14 further comprising a second flow path valve in cooperative association with second fluid flow path between each reservoir and the sample container docking station.

16. The system of claim 12 in which the location of the volumetric indicator on the side wall of each reservoir is at a position corresponding to an internal volume of the reservoir between the lower end of the reservoir and the position of the indicator that is substantially equal to a volume corresponding to one or more selected volumetric sample sizes minus the volume of blood component residing in at least a portion of the first fluid flow path.

17. The system of claim 12 in which the at least two reservoirs are individually separable from the blood component container.

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